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CITY-COUNTY OBSERVER

HOMEOWNED COMMUNITY NEWSPAPER

EST. 2002

Vol. 6 No. 1

January 2025

Evansville, IN

Hatfield Sworn In As County Circuit Court Judge

JANUARY 2025
By Johnny Kincaid

The crowd filled the courtroom and spilled out into the hall for the swearing-in Of Ryan Hatfield to his new position as Circuit Court Judge. The oath was administered by outgoing Judge David D. Kiely, who called Hatfield “a good person with a good heart” during the ceremony.



After the oath, Judge Hatfield said that he would “work to maintain the integrity of our courts, fostering an atmosphere where justice prevails, and the rule of law is upheld.”

Hatfield has served as the District 77 Representative in the State Legislature since 2016, and when Judge Kiely announced plans to retire, Hatfield saw a judgeship as an opportunity to spend more time at home with his young family.

As State Representative Hatfield served as the Assistant Minority Leader in the Indiana General Assembly as the ranking minority member of the Indiana House Judiciary and Employment, Labor and Pensions committees.

He was an attorney at Hatfield Law, representing criminal, family, divorce, and business law matters in state and federal courts. He also served as an adjunct faculty member at Ivy Tech Community College and as an instructor at the Southwest Indiana Law Enforcement Academy.

Prior to serving in the Indiana General Assembly and joining the law firm, Hatfield was a deputy-prosecutor in Vanderburgh County, where he prosecuted homicides, sexual assaults and drug offenses. As a member of the Vanderburgh County Treatment Court, as well as the Veterans Court, he worked to transition drug-addicted offenders into rehabilitation and back into their community.

Hatfield’s wife, Kendra, is a nurse and supervisor at St. Vincent’s Evansville. They have three children and are active on local boards and committees.

Ralph And Nova: A Bond Beyond Words

JANUARY 2025

Ralph and Nova were kindred spirits from the moment they met. Both had a calm, steady nature that drew people in, offering a quiet warmth and dependability that didn’t demand attention but left a lasting impact. Ralph, born and raised in Evansville, was known for his curiosity. When he saw Nova at the local pound, she had been there for 30 days, battling heartworms, fleas, and severe anemia. Their shared resilience and calm demeanor made them an instant match.

Nova entered Ralph’s life as he finished college, a period of significant change that soon tested his resilience. Named for her calm demeanor—a contrast to the explosive power her name implied—Nova became his steady companion. After Ralph began his engineering career, their bond deepened through shared routines and quiet moments. However, life shifted when Ralph was laid off during the COVID pandemic. Together, they relocated to Huntsville with his family, finding solace in each other as they adapted to new beginnings.

A Childhood of Loyalty

Restlessness eventually led Ralph to explore other possibilities. He packed his belongings and set off for Indianapolis, living out of Airbnb’s while he assessed the city’s opportunities and lifestyle. The experience of moving from place to place, while challenging, gave Ralph a clearer sense of what he wanted in life.

After months of reflection and travel, Ralph realized his ideal home was in Vancouver, WA. With its mix of natural beauty and vibrant community, Vancouver offered the perfect balance he had been



searching for. Nova, of course, remained by his side, adapting to each new environment with the same calm resilience that matched Ralph’s own.

A Heartbreaking Goodbye

At the age of 13, Nova began experiencing symptoms of Vestibular Disease. The condition caused disorientation, dizziness, and loss of balance. While Ralph hoped it was something temporary, Nova’s condition continued to worsen. The vet eventually suspected a brain tumor, and Ralph was faced with

Continued On Page 2

Help CCO Find Homes For Shelter Dogs

JANUARY 2025

While we have several no-kill animal rescue organizations in town, they tend to remain crowded. Found pets are taken to Animal Control and Care in Evansville and cared for until their owners come to claim them. However, the owners often don’t show up, and when the center gets full, the dogs that have been there for a long time are euthanized.

City-County Observer is teaming up with other animal lovers to help find loving homes for these pets. We’re establishing a fund to assist with adoption and reclaiming fees for those who can’t afford them. We’ll also devote space on our website to sharing weekly photos of some dogs currently waiting to be adopted at Animal Control and Care.



Turn To Page 2 To Learn More About Local Dog Adoption Options!

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Community

Town Hall Set To Help Find Homes For Shelter Dogs Jan. 15 Meeting To Discuss Placement For These Pups And More

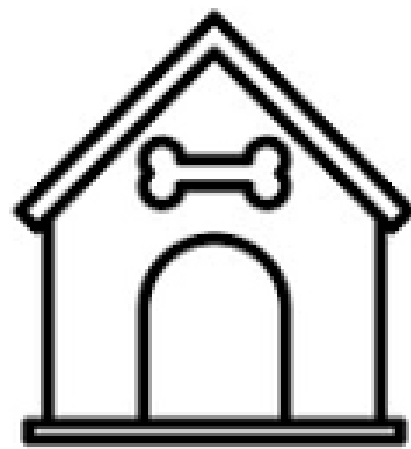


Continued From Page 1

The only way to save these animals' lives is for people to come forward and provide a new home. That home could be temporary through fostering or permanent through adoption. Join the Mayor for a special Animal Control Town Hall Meet-

ing – Wednesday, January 15, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. at the C.K. Newsome Center

Check these dogs out in person at Animal Care & Control Shelter, 815 Uhlhorn St, Evansville, or online www.24petconnect.com.



Ralph And Nova: A Bond Beyond Words

Continued From Page 1

an agonizing decision. On her final day, Ralph stayed by Nova's side, cradling her head in his lap as he had so many times before. He whispered words of

love and gratitude as she took her last breath. Though her calm, steadfast presence was gone, her love remained etched in Ralph's heart forever.

A Legacy of Love

To honor Nova, Ralph and his family created a fund to support dog adoptions, covering fees for young people looking for their own companions. The initiative became a way to spread the love

and loyalty that Nova had embodied.

"In memory of Nova, may your new family member bring you as much joy as Nova brought to us."

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Commentary

Jimmy Carter, In All His Humanity

JANUARY 2025

By John Krull

During his years in the White House, he was caricatured as a naïve, moralizing micromanager who was in over his head.

While he was commander-in-chief, events conspired to magnify his all too human shortcomings. Critics, for example, spun the tale of him scheduling time on the White House tennis court as an example of his controlling nature, rather than seeing it for what it was—a desperate attempt to keep squabbling longtime aides whom he could trust by his side while he struggled to defend himself in a hostile political climate.

The cliché is that his presidency was a failure.

In political terms, perhaps it was. His repudiation by the voters in the epochal 1980 presidential election in favor of Republican Ronald Reagan was decisive—so overwhelming that his fellow Democrats distanced themselves from him during campaign seasons for the rest of his long life.

Other Democratic presidents—Bill Clinton, Barack Obama—would find themselves in demand during election cycles, but rarely Carter, so toxic were the memories of his time in power.



The truth is that, in policy terms, his presidency was far more successful than it appeared.

His political weakness sprang from the same qualities that were his greatest source of strength—his determination to see things with his own eyes and make his own decisions, consulting in the end only with his own heart and his God in the process.

In those post-Vietnam years, he angered his fellow Democrats by strengthening the U.S. military. He thought the United States needed to have more flexible might at its disposal to meet the challenges presented by an evolving world.

After Carter left the White House, much of the muscle-flexing Reagan did on the world stage was done with muscles Carter provided.

The same was true of his economic policies.

He, perhaps alone among modern presidents, refrained from trying to artificially juice the American economy as he approached reelection. He believed in cycles of growth and saw government's role as a source of support for those who suffered during downswings, not as a stimulant to unnatural and ultimately dangerous growth spurts.

In short, he was the sort of pres-

ident—independent, guided by his own conscience—that so many Americans say they want but rarely mean it when they say it.

The characteristics that doomed his chances to be a two-term president, though, liberated him when he left the White House.

The second great cliché of Carter's life was that his post-presidency was a spectacular success.

In many ways it was.

He won a Nobel Prize for his humanitarian and diplomatic labors and earned the world's respect for his advocacy of enduring moral principles.

The same qualities that made him easy prey for Reagan served him better outside presidential strictures.

The traits that encouraged the presidents, Republican or Democrat, to keep him at arm's length—his independence and determination to follow his own conscience—made the poor, the dispossessed and the disparaged of the world see him as an honest broker, someone they could trust to hear and speak to their grievances and concerns.

It was this appreciation of the shared humanity of people around the world that tied his political career and his long post-presidential odyssey together.

His faith was grounded in a worldly understanding of human

frailty.

When he ran for president, he said in an interview that he had known lust in his heart. In an era in which our dominant political figure lusts openly for sex, for money and for power, Carter's admission seems quaint.

But his acknowledgement was consistent with his beliefs.

Before he was even sworn in as president, he stripped the inaugural proceedings of much of the pomp and circumstances that defined previous transitions of power. He and his wife, Rosalynn, walked in the parade as a reminder that they were not elevated above or distant from the people they led.

His message, in the White House or not, was always the same: We are all failed creatures in a hard world, and we should not look for strong men to save us.

Redeeming the life of this planet is God's work and, for the devout, God's work must truly be our own.

Jimmy Carter in all his flawed nobility died Dec. 29. He was 100. May he rest in peace.

John Krull is director of Franklin College's Pulliam School of Journalism and publisher of TheStatehouseFile.com, a news website powered by Franklin College journalism students. The views expressed are those of the author only and should not be attributed to Franklin College.

Twelve Things To Make America Better In 2025

JANUARY 2025

By Joe Wallace

In 2025, the United States stands at a critical juncture, facing opportunities to address deep-seated challenges and shape a brighter future. Here are twelve key actions the nation can take to foster progress and unity:

1. Revamp Education for the 21st Century The U.S. must prioritize a modernized, inclusive, and equitable education system. This includes expanding STEM programs, vocational training, and digital literacy to prepare students for evolving job markets. Investing in teacher training, infrastructure, and free community college initiatives can bridge education gaps and bolster economic competitiveness.

2. Advance Clean Energy and Combat Climate Change Accelerating the transition to renewable energy sources is vital. Federal support for solar, wind, and nuclear energy projects, alongside incentives for electric vehicle adoption, can reduce emissions. Infrastructure upgrades, such as a modernized grid and sustainable public transportation, will solidify America's leadership in combating climate change while creating jobs.

3. Reform the Healthcare System Affordable and accessible healthcare remains a pressing need. Expanding Medicaid, controlling prescription drug prices, and implementing mental health programs can improve overall well-being. Addressing systemic disparities in care is essential to achieving a healthier, more equi-

table society.

4. Invest in Infrastructure and Housing A robust infrastructure plan can revitalize the nation's roads, bridges, and water systems. Tackling the housing crisis by incentivizing affordable housing development and offering assistance to first-time homebuyers will address homelessness and housing insecurity.

5. Strengthen Bipartisan Governance Bridging political divides is paramount to restoring faith in government. Encouraging bipartisan initiatives on key issues like criminal justice reform, election integrity, and economic policy can rebuild public trust and foster national unity.

6. Support Small Businesses and Innovation Small businesses are the backbone of the economy. Simplifying tax codes, providing low-interest loans, and reducing regulatory hurdles will empower entrepreneurs. Enhancing funding for research and development can drive technological advancements and maintain the nation's competitive edge.

7. Address Systemic Inequality Combating racial, gender, and economic inequality requires targeted policies. Strengthening anti-discrimination laws, closing the gender pay gap, and offering economic opportunities in underserved communities will promote inclusivity and equity.

8. Reform Immigration Policy A comprehensive immigration reform plan is long overdue. Streamlining visa processes,

Continued On Page 4



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Community

Mayor Terry To Host Traveling City Hall Meetings

JANUARY 2025

Evansville Mayor Stephanie Terry again will host quarterly Traveling City Hall meetings in 2025, with the first scheduled for Wednesday, February 12, at the Dream Center (16 W. Morgan Ave.).

As with the 2024 Traveling City Hall events, the four 2025 events will take place in different locations around the city, offering residents the opportunity to hear directly from Mayor Terry, and to speak directly to department heads from across city government.

The 2025 Traveling City Hall schedule will be as follows:

Wednesday, February 12, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m., Dream Center (16 W. Morgan Ave.)

Wednesday, May 14, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m., Sunrise Pump Station

Wednesday, August 20, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m., Location TBD

Monday, November 3, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m., Location TBD

Each event will begin with brief remarks from Mayor Terry, offering updates from the Mayor's Office. Then, residents will have the opportunity to speak about their concerns directly with officials from all city departments, as well as special guests from other organizations. Among the special guests attending 2024 Traveling City Hall events were United Neighborhoods of Evansville, CenterPoint Energy, the University of Evansville, and representatives of



the Indiana Department of Transportation's Lloyd4U project.

Special guests for the 2025 events are still to be determined.

Alongside these events, Mayor Terry's administration will hold numerous other events for public input, comment, and conversation about specific topics. January 2025 will feature three such events, including:

Animal Control Town Hall – Wednesday, January 15, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. at the C.K. Newsome Center

Evansville Water-Sewer Utility Community Conversation – Sat-

urday, January 25, 10:00 a.m., Sunrise Pump Station

Evansville Department of Parks & Recreation's Parks Chat (Ward 4) – Wednesday, January 29, 6:00 p.m., Location TBD

"As a city government, we are here to serve the residents of Evansville," said Evansville Mayor Stephanie Terry. "It is our responsibility to ensure we're accessible, transparent, and responsive to the needs of our community. Traveling City Hall is an important way for us to connect directly with Evansville residents—to answer

their questions, address their concerns, and hear their ideas about how we can move our city forward.

"These events are about building trust and ensuring that every resident has the opportunity to engage with their local government on the issues that matter most to them."

Information about future events – including the locations of the final two Traveling City Hall events of 2025 – will be announced at a later date.

Twelve Things To Make America Better In 2025

Continued From Page 3

creating pathways to citizenship, and enhancing border security can balance compassion with practicality, benefiting both the economy and humanitarian interests.

9. Prioritize National Security and Cyber Defense Emerging threats demand a robust and adaptive national security strategy. Investments in cybersecurity infrastructure, international alliances, and counter-terrorism measures will protect citizens and maintain global stability.

10. Promote Civic Engagement and Media Literacy Strengthening democracy starts with an informed and engaged populace. Encouraging voter participation through accessible voting methods and implementing media literacy programs to combat misinformation will enhance civic responsibility and informed decision-making.

11. Improve Government Ef-

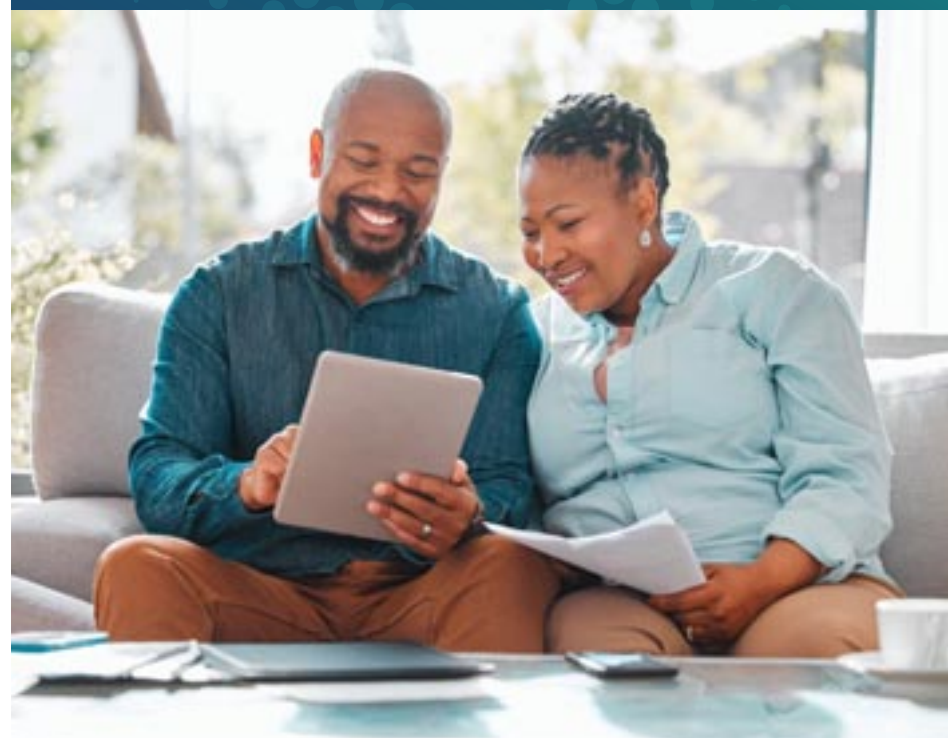
iciency Streamlining government operations and reducing bureaucratic red tape will enhance public trust and effectiveness.

Implementing technology-driven solutions, eliminating redundant programs, and fostering accountability can ensure taxpayer dollars are used responsibly.

12. Ensure a Healthier Food Supply Promoting sustainable agriculture and ensuring access to nutritious, affordable food can improve public health. Incentivizing local farming, reducing reliance on processed foods, and regulating harmful additives will create a stronger, healthier population.

By addressing these twelve priorities, the United States can take meaningful strides toward a more prosperous, sustainable, and unified future. Achieving these goals will require collective effort and visionary leadership from government, businesses, and communities alike.

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Community

Evansville City Council Adopts 2025 Schedule

JANUARY 2025

The City Council adopts the official regular meeting schedule at the beginning of each year. City Council meets two Mondays each month at 5:30 p.m. Central Standard Time in Council Chambers, room 301 on the third floor of the Civic Center. The Civic Center is located in downtown Evansville at 1 N.W. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd., Evansville, Indiana 47708.

However, if a Council committee meeting is scheduled, times vary. Check the agenda prior to each meeting to ensure you have the correct time and date.

The seating capacity for the Council meetings is 76. But all meetings are live streamed.

Watch live during meeting time. Online at www.evansville.in.gov/accessevc by selecting the "City Council Meeting" under the "Upcoming Events" header.

"Upcoming Events" are arranged by date, with the most recent at the top of the list. To watch the meeting and view agenda documents, click "Video". To listen to the meeting, click "Audio". To view documents, click "Agenda" or "Mi-

2025 CITY COUNCIL MEETING SCHEDULE																											
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Filing Deadline @ noon							City Council Meetings							Holidays							Updated 08/28/2024						

nutes".

Watch after the meeting. Archived videos of meetings are easier to navigate than ever! Topics of discussion are time-stamped

within the video allowing viewers the ability to quickly jump to any topic by clicking on the agenda item.

To view archived meeting foot-

age at www.evansville.in.gov/accessevc by selecting "For Archived Events" and then select "City Council" for a list of archived meeting information to view.

Lonestar Barbecue Is A 'Real Deal' Local Treasure

JANUARY 2025

By Johnny Kincaid

I don't usually write business reviews, but because I believe in supporting locally owned businesses and love eating really good Bar B Q, I recommend trying Lonestar Bar B Q on Washington Avenue. The owner recently made a prayer request on Facebook because business was slow during the fall months.

I've visited Lonestar several times, and the food always impresses me. The menu is simple and straightforward, exactly what I expect from a good BBQ joint. They offer beef, pork, chicken, sausage plates, sandwiches, nachos, and BBQ potatoes. The offerings for sides is equally simple, and soft drinks are served in cans instead of a fountain. If you've been to what I call "real deal" BBQ places, you've come to expect the simplicity and the counter service.

On my most recent visit, I ordered a rib plate. The ribs come already cut to single St. Louis-style ribs. You can always tell when a pitmaster is proud of the



quality of his product because the sauce is served on the side. I'm a believer that great BBQ needs no sauce. The ribs have a smokey flavor and are tender with the consistency of good competition ribs. The sauce is flavorful and not too sweet, with a nice little kick. If you want a big kick, they have a hotter

sauce you can ask for.

When it comes to ribs, I have a bit of experience sampling different styles. When Shlers was open in Evansville, JB sauced the ribs and cooked the sweet glaze, turning them into meat candy. It was so good that I had to take racks to Florida to share when I visited my

buddy Mike Harvey. On the other end of the scale, I love going to Rondesvou in Memphis for their amazing dry-rub ribs, and one time, I even tried to propose to the chef at Hard Rock in DC because the ribs with watermelon BBQ sauce were so awesome.

Among the sides at Lonestar, the green beans stand out. First, they are sweet, and then there's a little kick of heat. The potato salad is good but not remarkable, and the cornbread is sweet and moist.

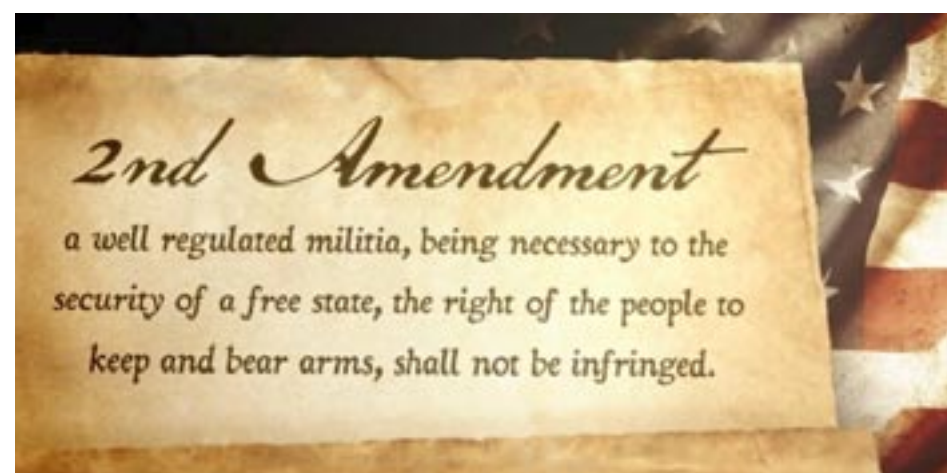
Be aware that a real pit boss at a real-deal BBQ joint knows how much meat he is able to smoke during a day without compromising quality. Great pit masters don't cook a bunch of meat ahead of time in hopes of selling it later. Quality is far more important than quantity. That means that great BBQ joints will sometimes run out of product, and there are days that Lonestar has to inform customers that they are sold out of some items. It's just part of the price you pay for real BBQ.

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2nd Amendment Patriots Jan./Feb. Meetings Cancelled



JANUARY 2025

The 2nd Amendment Patriots of Evansville will not meet in January or February. Group leader Jim Tomes tells us that scheduling conflicts forced the cancellation.

"We're looking forward to getting everyone together in March," Tomes said. That meeting, the first gathering since November, will be on March 29 at the VFW Post on Wabash Avenue.

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Community

2025 Tip Your Server Challenge - A Simple Act of Kindness

JANUARY 2025

By Johnny Kincaid

Years ago, my wife and I decided to treat ourselves to an upscale dinner at the Riverhouse downtown. The view was spectacular, the food was great, and the service was spot on. The meal was a real splurge and was barely affordable for our meager budget. When the bill came, I was so shocked at the total tab that I miscalculated the tip and accidentally gave the server a 50% tip. I have not been allowed to live that down.

Some people give impressively large tips to bless those who work hard to create a great dining experience. I recently became aware of a group of women that occasionally "tip the bill," meaning that their tip will equal what their total bill was. That's a very nice gesture, but some people take it even further than that.

Recently, a local couple gave their server at the Evansville



Longhorn Steakhouse a \$500 tip. They're not wealthy people; in fact, they have friends who contribute to their tip challenge

fund to make the big tips possible.

What if more people followed that example? Imagine how life-

changing it could be for that server to receive a \$50, \$100, or \$500 tip. I want to challenge you to set aside some cash (a cash gift from you is always better than a tip on a credit card) and ask some friends to contribute to the tip fund and bless a person who facilitated your dining experience.

Two other things to add to the challenge: First, write a note of encouragement to the server on the back of their copy of the receipt. I've watched servers gathering the entire restaurant staff to share the note. If you write a note, please accompany it with an appropriate tip.

The second step is to brag about the service to management. Tell the server that you want to talk to the manager. They'll think that you are going to complain, instead you use that as an opportunity to heap praise on the employee. You'd be amazed at the power of a few kind words.

What Are The Rules Regarding Intrusive Drones?

JANUARY 2025

Recent news reports about drone sightings have created a lot of buzz around the country. In recent weeks, federal officials have been trying to quiet the talk by explaining the drones as normal commercial traffic and mistaken identification of airplanes.

The FBI and DHS addressed the New Jersey sightings with a joint statement:

"We have no evidence at this time that the reported drone sightings pose a national security or public safety threat or have a foreign nexus.

We take seriously the threat that can be posed by unmanned aircraft systems (UAS), which is why law enforcement and other agencies continue to support New Jersey and investigate the reports. To be clear, they have uncovered no such malicious activity or intent at this stage. While there is no known malicious activity occurring in New Jersey, the reported sightings there do, however, highlight the insufficiency of current authorities."

There have been a few reports



of drone sightings in the Evansville area, leading to conversations that include the question, "Can't we just shoot them down?"

The simple answer is no. According to the FAA, "Shooting at an unmanned aircraft could result in a civil penalty from the FAA and/or criminal charges from federal, state, or local law enforcement."

There are some dangers associ-

ated with shooting down drones. If you do hit it there is a chance that the drone could hit a person and cause bodily injury. The odds are that even a great shot is unlikely to actually hit the small moving target, leaving that bullet to potentially hit a person.

At a recent Christmas drone lighting display in Orlando, several of the drones malfunctioned and dropped out of the sky. A

child was hospitalized because of his injuries.

If you see a drone being used recklessly or for illegal purposes, contact your local law enforcement.

If you encounter one of these drone clusters sparking public interest, consider taking a photo or video and sharing it with your local news outlet.



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Community

The Eclipse Tops Biggest Stories In Evansville List In 2024

JANUARY 2025

19. Evansville sports standout Clinton Keown dies in a car crash

18. Fall Festival breaks records in more ways than one

A week of good weather helped bring out record crowds for the week-long event that raises funds for numerous nonprofit groups. This year's half pot went to \$2 million, turning Al Lindsey into a millionaire with his winning ticket.

17. Police and firefighters received hefty raises

The pay increases brought Evansville police and firefighters to par with other cities in Indiana, improving recruiting and retention.

16. Ryan Hatfield elected Circuit Court Judge

Ryan Hatfield decided to step down from his seat as State Representative for District 77 and ran for Circuit Court Judge.

15. Evansville baseball beats No. 1 Tennessee in game 2 of the NCAA Super Regional

The Purple Aces took down the #1 national seed Tennessee Volunteers, 10-8, and, with the victory, Evansville evened the best-of-three Super Regional series with the Volunteers and forces the "if necessary" game. Tennessee won game three.

14. Liberty Federal Credit Union buys naming rights to USI sports arena for \$10 million

In October, the University of Southern Indiana announced Liberty Federal Credit Union has made a historic \$10 million gift to the University of Southern Indiana Foundation for USI Athletics, securing the naming rights to the Screaming Eagles Arena for the next 20 years. The Arena will now be named Liberty Arena, Home of the

Screaming Eagles.

13. City Councilman Alexander Burton is Elected to the Statehouse while questions swirl about the eligibility of his replacement

Burton ran unopposed for the District 77 Statehouse seat vacated by Ryan Hatfield. After the caucus held by Democrats to fill Burton's city council seat, allegations were raised about the eligibility of the new 4th Ward Council member. The controversy is likely to continue in 2025.

12. ONB/Bremer merger

Old National and St. Paul, Minn.-based Bremer Financial Corporation jointly announced that they are entering into a definitive merger agreement. Bremer, with \$16.2 billion in total assets, bolsters Old National's presence in the Twin Cities and expands its footprint into several other vibrant Midwestern markets

11. Lloyd Expressway construction

The Lloyd Expressway created headaches for drivers in 2024. While the re-engineered intersection at Epworth Road was finished, work at Vann/Stockwell and on the westside continues to be the scene of plenty of orange barrels.

10. Parks board passes a \$24 million bond

The Evansville Parks Board approved a \$24 million bond measure to pay for a handful of park projects. Before passage, they removed a planned \$10 million giraffe breeding barn from the list of projects.

9. Pike Mattress Factory Fire

The Pike Mattress Factory on Division Street burned down in September. The rubble on the site remains open with no fencing to keep children (or adults) off of the big piles of

bricks.

8. The Haitian population grew this year in Evansville, prompting Attorney General Todd Rokita to investigate local businesses and non-profits.

7. Lilly King brings home more Olympic gold

Stating that it would be her last Olympic competition. Evansville native Lilly King competed in the Paris Games, bringing more gold home with her.

6. Berry Plastics sold

Switzerland-based Amcor has agreed to buy Berry Global for \$8.43 billion in an all-stock deal, creating a consumer and healthcare packaging giant with combined revenues of \$24 billion.

5. Upeaval in the GOP

Despite the Republican victories at the federal, state, and local levels, the GOP experienced a year of turmoil throughout Indiana. The year started with record numbers of Republicans filing to run for Precinct Committee members (PCs) and Convention Delegate positions. The Vanderburgh County Chair filed challenges against some candidates and expelled three party members as not being "Republicans in good standing." The newly elected State Delegates went to the convention and approved Micah Beckwith for Lt. Governor over the choice of Gubernatorial candidate Mike Braun. Additionally, the state party chair stepped down after five months on the job. Despite the party turmoil, Republicans elected Mike Braun as Governor and swept the elections for county offices.

4. EREP Riverfront plan unveiled

The plan calls for a total renovation that would create a park setting along

the entire Evansville riverfront. The total price tag for improvements to the riverfront in Warrick, Posey, and Vanderburgh County is \$600 million over 30 years.

3. Cheryl Musgrave defeated in the primary

After decades of public service, Cheryl Musgrave was defeated during the primary in her bid for re-election to county commissioner.

2. Mayor Terry takes office

Evansville's first black and first female mayor was sworn in for her first term in January. Mayor Terry announced an initiative to fight blight in the city, distributed opioid settlement money to non-profits, and crafted a city budget for next year that totals almost half a billion dollars.

1. The Eclipse

In perhaps the most anticipated 2 minutes of 2024, the Evansville area was in a perfect position for total darkness during the total eclipse that drew thousands of visitors to the area. Explore Evansville reported the following economic impact to the region:

•Visitor Volume: The total visitor volume during this period was 150,382.

•Visitor Lift: There was a significant visitor lift of 40,004, representing the additional visitors specifically due to the eclipse.

•Tourism Spending Lift: The total tourism spending lift amounted to \$6.6 million, reflecting the additional expenditure generated by the influx of visitors.

•Direct Business Impact: The total direct business impact, identified as "economic impact" in the study, was \$4.6 million. This figure represents the value added to the regional economy due to the increased tourism activity.

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FAITH & VALUES †

Keep Our Local Leaders In Your Prayers For 2025

JANUARY 2025

By Johnny Kincaid

As we step into a brand-new year, 2025, it's a perfect time to reflect and look ahead with hope and purpose. Here in Evansville and Vanderburgh County, our leaders carry the weight of making decisions that affect us all. Their work is far from easy, and that's why it's so important for us to support them—not just with words, but with our prayers.

The Bible reminds us to pray for our leaders. In 1 Timothy 2:1-2, it says: "I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness." This is such a great reminder that praying for our leaders is not just a nice thing to do—it's something we're called to do.

In Evansville, Mayor Stephanie Terry enters her second year leading our city. We should be lifting her up in prayer daily. Let's pray that God gives her strength, wisdom, and a clear path forward as she navigates the challenges of her office. Let's also pray for her team and everyone who works alongside her to bring positive change to Evansville.

Our Vanderburgh County Commissioners—Mike Goebel, Justin Elpers, and Amy Canterbury—also have big responsibilities. From managing budgets to addressing public health and safety, their decisions have a direct impact on our everyday lives. Let's pray that they are guided by wisdom, compassion, and a heart for serving everyone in our county.

We can't forget our City Council and County Council members. These folks work hard to make sure all voices in our community are heard and that resources are used wisely. Whether they're tackling local ordinances, supporting small businesses, or improving public services, their work matters. Let's



pray for their clarity, courage, and unity as they make decisions that affect us all.

And let's take a moment to think about our police and fire departments. Police Chief Phillip Smith and Fire Chief Tony Knight lead teams that show up every single day to protect and serve us. Their jobs are tough, and the pressures they face are huge. Let's pray for their safety and strength, and that they're able to carry out their duties with fairness and compassion.

Education is such a big part of our community's future, and Dr. David Smith, Superintendent of the Evansville Vanderburgh School Corporation and the EVSC School Board, are leading that charge. Our teachers, staff, and school leaders are shaping the minds of the next generation. Let's pray they feel supported, inspired, and equipped to meet the needs of every student.

We should also remember to pray for the judges and legal professionals in our community. Their decisions often have long-lasting impacts on people's lives. Let's ask God to give them wisdom, fairness, and compassion as they carry out their responsibilities.

And don't forget about the many people working behind the scenes in city and county departments.

From sanitation workers to social service providers, their efforts often go unnoticed, but they're essential to keeping everything running smoothly. Let's pray for their well-being and that they feel valued for the important work they do.

Prayer is such a powerful way to bring us together as a community. It helps us focus on what really matters and reminds us that, despite our differences, we all want what's best for Evansville and Vanderburgh County. When we pray for our leaders, we're not just asking for help—we're also showing that we care and that we're invested in the success of our community.

So, as we start this new year, let's make a commitment to pray regularly for our leaders. Maybe you can set aside a few minutes each week to pray for them. Talk to your friends, family, or church groups about joining in. Imagine the impact if hundreds or even thousands of people across our community lifted up Mayor Stephanie Terry, our commissioners, council members, and all our local leaders in prayer. One group meets every Tuesday at noon at City Gate, 320 Eagle Crest in Evansville.

Let's also be specific in our prayers. Pray for new job opportunities and strong economic growth

so that everyone in Evansville and Vanderburgh County can thrive. Pray for safety in our neighborhoods and for solutions to challenges like homelessness and addiction. Pray for good health for all our residents and for access to the resources they need. Pray for unity among our leaders and within our community, so we can work together to achieve great things.

And remember, prayer is just the beginning. We can also show our support by staying engaged. Attend city and county meetings, share your thoughts in constructive ways, and encourage our leaders whenever you can. When we pair prayer with action, we can truly make a difference.

Proverbs 3:5-6 says it so well: "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight." Let's keep this verse in mind as we pray for our leaders in 2025. Let's trust that God will guide them and help them make decisions that honor Him and benefit everyone in our community.

Here's to a year of hope, progress, and unity in Evansville and Vanderburgh County. Together, through prayer and action, we can make 2025 a year to remember.

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Comics & Puzzles

TANK McNAMARA
by Bill Hinds



GET FUZZY
by darby conley



Universal Crossword

Edited by David Steinberg March 17, 2024

- ACROSS**
- 1 "Poor me"
 - 5 Fraud
 - 9 "What disappointing news!"
 - 14 Lean
 - 15 Yarn you can't knit with
 - 16 "Fingers crossed"
 - 17 McDonald's slogan
 - 19 Kind of lens for close-ups
 - 20 Meals delivered via curbside pickup, e.g.
 - 22 Word after "stretched" or "wore"
 - 23 Inventor Whitney
 - 24 Inbox zero
 - 26 Sensitive ID
 - 28 Chief prosecutors, for short
 - 31 Installed, as a carpet
 - 32 "Go ahead" signals
 - 34 1996 Demi Moore film based on a Carl Hiaasen novel
 - 39 Something working as it's supposed to, contrary to intuition
 - 41 "Time to leave!"
 - 42 Like a three-hour movie
 - 43 Played with, as a dreidel
 - 44 The "S" of CST: Abbr.
- DOWN**
- 1 Working hard
 - 2 Car with sideways-facing seats
 - 3 Like some bathrooms
 - 4 Seat that might have three legs
 - 5 Use a mixing spoon
 - 6 -holding
 - 7 Extraterrestrial
 - 8 Routes shown on some transit maps
 - 9 Axe-throwing skill
 - 10 "I'd be foolish NOT to buy this!"
 - 11 Chewy Japanese rice cake
 - 12 Earth Day's month
 - 13 Safety vest hues, e.g.
 - 18 Invalidate
 - 21 Cargo ship's stop
 - 25 Catcher's glove
 - 26 Two-finger sound
 - 27 Seat seen in "Sons of Anarchy"?
 - 29 Unsurprisingly
 - 30 Intimidates to get one's way
 - 33 Increasingly optional parts of college applications
 - 35 Make noise at a red light, say
 - 36 Order leading to quick turnarounds?
 - 37 Phoenix hoops squad
 - 38 Some donated cells
 - 40 Category
 - 45 2022 FIFA World Cup's city
 - 47 Disreputable
 - 48 Black tea variety
 - 49 Crop up
 - 50 Digital counterpart to brick-and-mortar sales
 - 52 Flutes in military bands
 - 55 "Como usted?"
 - 56 Thorn locale
 - 57 Gait faster than a walk
 - 58 "Deadly" septet
 - 60 Fireplace remnant

Find The Answers To This Month's Puzzle on Page 14

Sudoku Pacific

Complete the grid so that every row, column and 3x3 box contains every digit from 1 to 9 inclusively.

				6		4	5
		8	2		6		
	9		4			2	
4	1	3					
	9			1			6
					2	3	4
	2			6		4	
		5		7	3		
7	1		2				

1-25

DIFFICULTY RATING: ★★★★★

Themeless Sunday 77 by Evan Kalish

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8		9	10	11	12	13
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17				18						19				
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65						66						67		

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Education

UE Announces Marjorie Vogel Endowed Scholarship In Nursing

JANUARY 2025

The University of Evansville (UE) is pleased to announce a generous \$147,000 bequest from the estate of Marjorie A. Vogel, a 1945 alumna.

This contribution will support the upkeep of Carson Center's athletic facilities and establish the Marjorie Vogel Endowed Scholarship in Nursing.

Ms. Vogel earned her bachelor's degree from UE's Dunigan Family School of Nursing and dedicated over 30 years to serving the local medical community, concluding



her career at UE's Student Health Clinic. A devoted fan of UE men's basketball, she rarely missed a home game.

In her gift, Marjorie recognized the value of excellent athletic facilities for student-athletes by directing a portion of the funds to maintain Carson Center. The remainder will create an endowed nursing scholarship, reflecting her own experiences in UE's nursing program and her commitment to helping future students in need.

The University is deeply thankful for Ms. Vogel's generosity, which will benefit both student-athletes and aspiring nurses for years to come.

VU's Lederman Selected For Prestigious Tobias Fellows

JANUARY 2025

Jaci Lederman, the Executive Director of Information Technology and Chief Information Officer at Vincennes University, has proudly been selected for the 20th cohort of Tobias Fellows by The Randall L. Tobias Center for Leadership Excellence at Indiana University.

Lederman is one of 22 exceptionally talented and experienced leaders chosen for the prestigious yearlong interactive program.

According to VU President Dr. Chuck Johnson, "Jaci's extraordinary leadership and extensive knowledge have been pivotal in transforming Vincennes University. She has successfully modernized our technology landscape, making a lasting impact on the VU Community. Her selection as a Tobias Fellow is a well-deserved recognition of her outstanding contributions."

The Tobias Fellows program focuses on cultivating skills that

help fellows further develop personal leadership and ensure an immediate impact on their institutions and organizations. Fellows engage in leadership retreats and one-on-one executive coaching sessions and work toward mastering key leadership competencies, including mindset, vision, perspective, collaboration, communication, and self-awareness.

Lederman is eager for the unique leadership development opportunities she'll experience as a fellow.

Lederman said, "Joining the Tobias Fellows excites me! It will enhance my knowledge, broaden my perspectives, foster unparal-

leled connections, and challenge me to grow into a more impactful leader. I can't wait to embrace this incredible journey."

Her professional career and previous IT leadership in Southwest Indiana is nothing short of impressive. A VU graduate, Lederman started as a faculty member in the Information Technology program in 2011, eventually achieving the professor rank and serving as the department chair for more than five years.

Before becoming the Executive Director of Information Technology and Chief Information Officer in 2023, Lederman served as the University's Director of Enterprise Applications. Lederman has led



VU's IT modernization and digital transformation. She has been instrumental in launching the new VU-X internal portal and app, as well as multiple other software tools. She also founded the inaugural VU Women IN Tech Symposium and Showcase in 2024.

Lederman demonstrates a deep commitment to community service and is a dedicated volunteer for United Way's Day of Caring, consistently giving time and effort to support impactful initiatives.

Her qualifications include a range of credentials, including IT, cybersecurity, and project management certifications, a Master of Business Administration with a concentration in IT Management from Western Governors University, a Bachelor of Science in Management from the University of Phoenix, and an Associate of Science in Computer Programming from VU.

Ivy Tech Seeks \$35 Million From Indiana Assembly For Expansion

JANUARY 2025

Ivy Tech has included a \$35 million expansion and renovation capital proposal for the Evansville campus as part of its biennial budget request to the Indiana General Assembly. If funded by the legislature, the project will help meet the educational, workforce and technology needs of Southwest Indiana by accommodating an existing need for more space for healthcare instruction and hands-on learning and the increasing and evolving automotive technology needs in this region. It also plans for future growth in high demand programs like Smart Manufacturing and Digital Integration.

The Evansville service area, which includes the counties of Vanderburgh, Warrick, Posey, Gibson, Pike, Daviess, Knox, Spencer, Perry and Dubois, has experienced increasing growth year over year for the last several years – from 10,155 to last



year's 11,886 – and this realignment is a critical need to support this growth to reach Ivy Tech Evansville's goal of 10% of the recruitable population in this region. The proposed expansion is expected to increase enrollment by more than 620 stu-

dents and increase credentials by more than 460 per year.

This project aligns with the college's strategic plan with goals of Indiana leadership, the Indiana Economic Development Commission, as well as needs identified by TalentEVV,

OCRA HELP initiatives and READI proposals.

Specific industry impacts include:
Healthcare: 1,196 jobs
Advanced Manufacturing: 2,500 jobs

Transportation & Logistics: 850 jobs

It also plans for new lab space for the Entrepreneurship Program, now capped at 25 students, but with growing interest; Visual Communications renovation of darkroom space into usable lab space, demolition of adjacent space to the main campus, now used for various college classrooms and offices, upgrade of outdoor activity spaces and the current auditorium; as well as a re-imagining of the school's library.

The proposed expansion is expected to increase enrollment by more than 600 students and increase credentials by more than 450 per year.

USI Homecoming To Celebrate The Screaming Twenties

JANUARY 2025

The University of Southern Indiana will host its 2025 Homecoming Week, featuring a variety of events for USI students, faculty, staff, alumni, friends and families to enjoy Friday through Saturday, February 1-8.

The 2025 theme, Homecoming: The Screaming Twenties, is a play on the Roaring Twenties. Events include the first annual Homecoming Day of Service, Casino Night, a Homecoming Student-Athlete Panel and much more. A full list of activities is available on the Homecoming website.

On Saturday, February 8, USI Women's and Men's Basketball will take on Southeast Missouri State University. Games will begin at 5 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. respectively. A Coronation Ceremony recognizing 13 USI students selected for the 2025 Homecoming Court will take place during halftime of the USI Men's Basketball game. Two Homecoming Majesties will be crowned at the Ceremony.

During both basketball games,

Alumni Engagement and Volunteer USI will have two photo booth opportunities for fans to enjoy throughout the Arena, as well as face painting and caricature portraits. A table will be set up at the entrance of the Arena for guests to claim a free popcorn voucher and spirit gear.

"Homecoming is a chance for our students, alumni and community to participate and contribute to an ongoing development of tradition and

history on our campus. Being a younger institution, we are uniquely positioned to bring people together—from the first graduates of USI all the way to the next generation of Screaming Eagles yet to come," says Allison Weihe, Assistant Director of Student Activities and Traditions. "We invite everyone to come back home to celebrate the University's history, accomplishments, and promising future by participating in events like our Homecoming Day of Service and by supporting our incredible student-athletes at the Homecoming games. Go Screagles!"



Sports

UE Announces Weinberg As Head Volleyball Coach

JANUARY 2025

University of Evansville Director of Athletics Dr. Kenneth "Ziggy" Siegfried has announced the hiring of Zachary Weinberg as Head Volleyball Coach for the Purple Aces program.

"We are thrilled to welcome Zach, his wife Paige, and their children Ian and Eliana to the Purple Aces family. Coach Weinberg's values perfectly align with those at UE," Siegfried said. "He values developing well-rounded student-athletes, lifelong learning, and he understands the importance of the impact that UE has in our community and beyond. He also brings a wealth of experience and a proven ability to build successful teams at the Division I level."

Weinberg joins the Aces program following a seven-year stint on the staff at Tennessee Tech where he served as the Associate Head Volleyball Coach since June 2021. He began his role with the TTU program in February of 2018 as an assistant coach. His staff inherited a team that went 2-14 in the Ohio Valley Conference in 2017 and turned it into a 14-4 squad that finished in second place in the OVC in 2022. In 2024, the Golden Eagles went 24-8, finishing with their highest win total since 1983.

Over a four-year span, Weinberg helped raise the RPI of the Golden Eagles from 313 in 2017 to 154 in 2021, an improvement of 159 positions. His responsibilities included the training of setters, middle blockers, and pin hitters while overseeing the entire offensive scheme. Off the floor, he managed the operating and travel budgets of the program while serving as the liaison to housing, marketing, and sports information. He also coordinated social media for the program.

"I am honored, humbled and excited to be named the head coach at the University of Evansville. I'd like to thank Dr. Ziggy Siegfried and the entirety of the Search Advisory Committee for their time and professionalism in running the search and for gifting me this opportunity to lead the Purple Aces program," Weinberg exclaimed. "From the moment I stepped foot in Evansville, I could feel how this community rallies around the volleyball program and how ready they are to support these student-athletes. UE is a special place, and I can't wait to get to know the student-athletes and aid them in reaching their academic and athletic goals while providing them with the best experience I can. Today is a



dream come true, and my family and I can't wait to embed ourselves into the Evansville community!"

"I would also like to thank everyone who aided me in getting to this huge step in my career, but especially those from my time in Cookeville with Tennessee Tech. Head Coach Jeannette Phillips, Athletic Director Mark Wilson, SWA Mandy Thatcher, and the rest of the TTU admin team provided me with so much autonomy and opportunity for growth that it shaped me into the coach I am today," Weinberg added. "It has been a wonderful 7 years in Cookeville, and I'm deeply appreciative of all the love and support they have poured into me. I also want to thank my biggest supporter-my wife, Paige- for her constant love and support and for allowing me to follow my dreams. None of who I am as a coach and person is possible without her endless support."

Aside from his work with the indoor program, Weinberg was named the first-ever Head Beach Volleyball Coach in TTU history. In the inaugural season for the program in 2023, Weinberg directed his squad to a 4th-place finish in the OVC along with two wins in the conference tournament. He oversaw the management of the entire program while managing an assistant coach and student manager.

Weinberg is also an active member of the American Volleyball Coaches Association (AVCA) and has served in multiple roles within the organization. He has served on the Board of Directors for the last two years as the Assistant Coaches representative while simultaneously serving on the AVCA's High School All-American Selection Committee. As the board representative, Weinberg chairs the organization's Assistant Coaches Committee and in 2021 was recognized as an AVCA 30 Under 30 award winner, which recognizes 30 of the top up-and-coming coaches in the country under the age of 30.

Prior to his time at Tennessee Tech, Weinberg served as an Assistant Vol-

leyball Coach at UNLV. Posting a 24-8 record, UNLV finished 33rd in the RPI on its way to the school's first-ever at-large bid to the NCAA Tournament where his team upset #22 Utah in the opening round. His work with UNLV included the recruiting of student-athletes on a nationwide scale while coordinating and conducting on-campus recruiting

In two seasons as an assistant coach at Northwestern State, Weinberg helped NSU capture its first and only Southland Conference Tournament Championship and NCAA Tournament berth in 2014. He worked within all facets of in-gym training at NSU while working extensively in video and Cauldron—a complex statistical document that stores statistics for each member of the team and compares their production to the top players in the conference.

His work in college volleyball began at Ohio University where he was a Student Assistant Coach from December of 2008 through March of 2012. As a sophomore, he was promoted from student manager to Student Assistant Coach. In his time with the Bobcats, the program won three Mid-American Conference regular season championships, three MAC Tournament Championships and a berth in the NCAA Tournament in each season.

Between 2015 and 2022, Weinberg was the Head Volleyball Coach for Maccabi USA Volleyball. He led the Indoor Women's Youth team and Open Women beach team to gold medals at the 2015 Pan-American Maccabi Games in Santiago, Chile. In 2022, he directed the Maccabi USA Women's Open Team to a 4th-place finish in the 2022 Maccabiah in Jerusalem, Israel.

Weinberg's first head coaching position was at Camden Catholic High School (N.J.) where he led the program in 2013, just its second season in existence. Following a 1-21 season prior to his arrival, Weinberg won nine games in 2013 while finishing second in its division.

Student-athletes have benefited

greatly from Weinberg's tutelage. He recruited and mentored 2024 OVC Player of the Year Madolyn Isringhausen while guiding her to four All-OVC selections including three on the first team. Isringhausen was named the AVCA National Player of the Week on Nov. 12, 2024, as well as being named Tennessee Tech's first ever AVCA All-American at the conclusion of the 2024 season. He led Jordan Karlen to a pair of All-OVC First Team selections along with OVC Freshman and Setter of the Year honors. Weinberg has led multiple other student-athletes to conference and regional accolades.

Weinberg is married to his wife, Paige. They have two children-Ian (4) and Eliana (1).

WHAT THEY ARE SAYING
Mark Wilson-Tennessee Tech Athletic Director

"Zach is a rising star in the volleyball world and has been a huge part of our success on the court along with leading Tennessee Tech's entry into beach volleyball! Evansville is getting a superb coach but an even better person and family!"

Jeannette Phillips-Tennessee Tech Head Volleyball Coach

"Zach has always prioritized relationships with those he works with and our loss is Evansville's gain. He has been passionate about continuing his coaching career as a Head Coach; it was always just a matter of him finding the perfect fit, and I am so happy that he found that in Evansville. The Tennessee Tech staff and players all support this move for Zach and we wish him well in the next step in his coaching journey."

Jaime Gordon-CEO of the American Volleyball Coaches Association

"Evansville made a great choice to bring in Zach as their head volleyball coach. He is a professional who is committed to building a sustainable program of success on a foundation of high character that will make the community proud."

Jaclynn Wilson-UT Martin Head Volleyball Coach

"Evansville made a great choice in selecting Zach Weinberg as its new head volleyball coach. I've coached against him for years, and he has continually demonstrated the qualities that make him a leader, on and off the court. Not only is he passionate about volleyball, but his commitment to his student athletes is unmatched. Evansville has landed a terrific coach and an even better person."

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Sports

Hoosier Girls Have Embraced Caitlin Clark

JANUARY 2025

By **Averi Phelps**

While Caitlin Clark is known for her incredible skills as a former Iowa Division I and current WNBA Indiana Fever basketball player, her impact shoots beyond the court.

The Rookie of the Year stole the hearts of Hoosiers in a famously basketball-obsessed state and has created a new phenomenon for girls' and women's basketball now in the heart of their own season.

Teagan Cox, a smiley third-grade New Castle girl proudly wearing a sweatshirt with Clark's No. 22 on the front and back, said her interest in the basketball star started when she saw her on TV, which then grew her confidence in her own abilities.

"Like, whenever I started playing, I didn't really know that she played until I started seeing her on things," said Cox. "She made me feel like I could play too."

Teagan's favorite thing about Clark is the inspiration she's brought to her.

"She makes me feel like I can be as good as she is," Teagan said.

New Castle is home to the largest high-school gymnasium in the nation, New Castle Fieldhouse, which seats more than 8,000 fans and where young girls like Cox will grow up to play.

Alyssa Wilson, head girls' basketball coach at New Castle High School, says she notices a change in the atmosphere due to Clark. During practice in the gigantic gym, the words "Clark" echo across the court when a three-pointer is made, versus the old exclamations of influential male basketball players.

"[She is] a pop culture effect," Wilson said. "She changed the narrative."

Wilson enjoys how much attention Clark has brought to basketball, as she is able to discuss her with her players and use her as an example. However, she believes her skills influence female athletes in general.

Some of her favorite attributes of Clark are how hard she plays and the competitiveness she brings to the game. She also admires her reactions during the game, as it shows she takes the game seriously.

"[She's] not afraid to show emotion on the court; she cares," Wilson said.

Wilson advises players to exhibit her work ethic by observing her.

"[It's] not just the way she plays; it's the hard work and extra time she puts in," said Wilson. "That is what it takes to excel. You have to do extra

training and work outside of practice and games."

Clark's accomplishments have also piqued the interest of men, as she has shattered viewing records. For example, her first game with the Fever was ESPN's most watched WBNA game ever.

Chad Tabor, JV girls' basketball coach at New Castle High School, believes her influence has changed men's perspective on the game.

"It's crazy the impact, and it goes out more than girls, I think," said Tabor. "I'll use my son, for example. When [my daughter] Cameron had games or there was girls' basketball on or whatever, he would always make these comments, you know, 'It's just girls' basketball.' Well now, when Caitlin is on, he watches."

He isn't the only one. Her win against LSU's Angel Reese back in February had 12 million viewers, a number that used to seem impossible to reach for women's games.

Tabor has high hopes for the future of women's basketball, thanks to Clark.

"As far as being a coach of girls' basketball, ... my hope would be that it gets more girls interested in playing basketball," Tabor said. "I think you'll see that as we go, especially as some of the younger kids, you know, maybe fourth, fifth, sixth, into junior high, I'll think you'll see more kids play when they get to high school because of her."

He thinks her main attraction comes from her relationship with fans.

"One part that makes her so popular and well liked would be how she interacts with kids and, you know, younger players. She seems to always make time for them," Tabor said. "She is always doing autographs. I think she just gets it, like she is on a platform where she can influence, you know, kids, and I think she understands that."

Like Wilson, he is impressed by the effort she puts into the sport, even more than her skillset.

"She's very confident, and she goes hard. I think her work ethic is very strong, and I think that's why she is so good, because she's got that will to win, good work ethic, and she puts in the time. It's no coincidence that she is one of the greatest because it doesn't happen if you don't work hard," said Tabor.

Those on the college scene have also had firsthand experience of

Clark's effect on the sport.

Bailey Parham was a successful basketball player at Tri High School in Straughn. Now a sophomore basketball player at the University of Illinois-Springfield, she said she has personally witnessed Clark's influence on players.

"Being around my teammates here, who were supporting her and like looking up to her and the records she was breaking and thinking, like, in the NCAA, we have the ability to do that too, like some of my teammates, we'll talk about that," said Parham.

She has also seen the change in attendance during games.

"I went to a couple Fever games this year. We had went to games before that, and the years before that, and just seeing a difference in the crowd—like, there are so many more fans there," she said. "I think she just brought a whole new fanbase to the game. So many people that were never even interested in watching the WNBA before, or girls' sports in general, I think have watched her and started to follow her teams, and it has been really cool to see her do that."

Parham finds Clark's main attribute, aside from her talents on the court as an "unbelievable shooter," to be the way she has dealt with her popularity and fame.

"She stays composed and, like, she's had a lot of stuff put on her this year, you know, like being a rookie, just being able to handle all that. Like, so many people are watching her, and all eyes are on her about every-

thing, and I just think she's done a really good job handling all that," said Parham.

She also admires the way Clark never gives up no matter what she is handed and tries to implement that in her own game.

"Just to keep playing no matter what is thrown at you, no matter the situation, and whatever you get handed, you have to face it and just keep playing through everything," she concluded.

Livvi Lee, an athletic third-grade basketball player from New Castle, says she is a huge fan of Clark for two main reasons: her attitude for the sport and the choices she makes on the court.

"She's athletic and has good sportsmanship," Livi says. "I like how she shoots her three pointers and stuff, gets her teammates the ball!"

Third-grader Harper White sat doing homework after school, her eyes lighting up at the words "Caitlin Clark." Her admiration for Clark goes back to the player's college days at the University of Iowa. Harper has also seen her in action at Gainbridge Fieldhouse during a Fever game.

"She's a good basketball player, and she supports her team," said Harper.

Clark's mere presence in the WNBA has made girls like Harper feel supported and inspired in their own athletic endeavors, she says, and she's happy she plays the same sport.

Franklin College senior and Statehouse File reporter Averi Phelps completed this article as part of her senior project. Phelps graduated in



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Joseph Snyder, Jr.

Dec. 24, 1962 – Dec. 27, 2024

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 Dr. Brenda Sue Collins Sep. 02, 1953 – Dec. 03, 2024
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 Shirley Ann Hayse Dec. 11, 1936 – Dec. 08, 2024
 Larry Mitchell Rose Aug. 25, 1940 – Dec. 09, 2024
 Dorothy Jean Cotton Nov. 06, 1932 – Dec. 12, 2024
 Barbara Jean Williams Feb. 16, 1937 – Dec. 15, 2024
 Judith J. Bacon Aug. 04, 1941 – Dec. 18, 2024
 Steve R. West Jan. 22, 1949 – Dec. 18, 2024
 Martha J. Mason Oct. 18, 1933 – Dec. 19, 2024
 Robert Eugene Garrett Feb. 27, 1966 – Dec. 23, 2024
 Nell Kranawetter Arbeiter Apr. 14, 1925 – Dec. 24, 2024
 Robin Rand Holder Nov. 08, 1939 – Dec. 24, 2024
 Mattie Mai Terry Aug. 08, 2938 – Dec. 28, 2024

West

Carolyn Sue Orman Aug. 25, 1951 – Dec. 01, 2024
 Daniel H. Lewis Feb. 25, 1960 – Dec. 03, 2024
 Darlene Sue Mullen Apr. 03, 1939 – Dec. 03, 2024
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 Margaret "Marnie" Jean Utley May 05, 1963 – Dec. 06, 2024
 Marcia Ann Burgdorf May 19, 1957 – Dec. 09, 2024
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 Donald Edward Lasher Jun. 16, 1931 – Dec. 14, 2024
 Judith Ann Rister Jul. 21, 1944 – Dec. 16, 2024
 Verna (Hahn) Hudson Oct. 24, 1932 – Dec. 16, 2024
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 Layton Grand Word Apr. 01, 1929 – Dec. 21, 2024
 John Wayne Rebstock Nov. 03, 1937 – Dec. 22, 2024
 Freddie Jerome Couto Nov. 08, 1963 – Dec. 21, 2024
 Barbara Jean Wigginton Jul. 05, 1938 – Dec. 27, 2024
 Priscilla Dean Baggett Jun. 24, 1940 – Dec. 29, 2024

North

Linda L. Cotton Nov. 05, 1944 – Dec. 03, 2024
 Elizabeth "Betty" T. Fischer Apr. 12, 1929 – Dec. 06, 2024
 David R. Mullen Jun. 13, 1950 – Dec. 07, 2024
 Danette Benthall Mar. 03, 1949 – Dec. 11, 2024
 Dwight Markwell May 23, 1050 – Dec. 12, 2024
 Marilyn Weisman Jan. 13, 1941 – Dec. 14, 2024
 Virgil I. Messel Mar. 03, 1924 – Dec. 26, 2024
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 Kevin Runion Aug. 23, 1949 – Dec. 21, 2024
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 Brenda Sue Dorsey Nov. 28, 1940 – Dec. 08, 2024
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 Virgin Hohn Jost Feb. 18, 1936 – Dec. 09, 2024
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 Mary B. Littrell Oct. 19, 1942 – Nov. 05, 2024
 Sarah Elizabeth Keltner Sep. 19, 1984 – Nov. 06, 2024

Sudoku Puzzle Answer

Jan. 25

1	8	2	9	3	6	7	4	5
5	7	4	8	2	1	6	3	9
6	3	9	7	4	5	1	2	8
4	6	1	3	5	7	8	9	2
2	9	3	4	1	8	5	6	7
8	5	7	6	9	2	3	1	4
3	2	8	5	6	9	4	7	1
9	4	5	1	7	3	2	8	6
7	1	6	2	8	4	9	5	3

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A	L	A	S		S	H	A	M		A	W	M	A	N
T	I	L	T		T	A	L	E		I	H	O	P	E
I	M	L	O	V	I	N	I	T		M	A	C	R	O
T	O	G	O	O	R	D	E	R	S		T	H	I	N
		E	L	I			N	O	E	M	A	I	L	S
S	S	N		D	A	S		L	A	I	D			
N	O	D	S		S	T	R	I	P	T	E	A	S	E
A	F	E	A	T	U	R	E	N	O	T	A	B	U	G
P	A	R	T	Y	S	O	V	E	R		L	O	N	G
			S	P	U	N		S	T	D		U	S	S
S	P	A	C	E	A	G	E			O	F	T		
H	E	R	O		L	A	T	E	S	H	I	F	T	S
A	K	I	R	A		R	A	S	T	A	F	A	R	I
D	O	S	E	S		M	I	T	E		E	C	O	N
Y	E	E	S	H		S	L	A	M		S	E	T	S

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